The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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THE CHRISTIAN'S FATHERLAND.

Where is the Christian's Fatherland?
Is it the holy Hebrew land?
In Nazareth's vale, on Zion's steep,
Or by the Galilean deep?
Where pilgrim hosts have rushed to lave
Their stains of sin in Jordan's wave,
Or sought to win by brand and blade
The tomb wherein their Lord was laid?

Where is the Christian's Fatherland?
Is it the haunted Grecian strand,
Where apostolic wanderers first
The yoke of Jewish bondage burst?
Or where, on many a mystic page,
Byzantine prelate, Coptic sage,
Fondly essayed to intertwine
Earth's shadows with the light divine?

Or is the Christian's Fatherland
Where, with crowned head and croziered hand,
The Ghost of Empire proudly flits,
And on the grave of Cæsar sits?
Oh, by those world-embracing walls;
Oh, in those vast and pictured halls;
Oh, underneath that soaring dome,—
Shall this not be the Christian's home?

Where is the Christian's Fatherland?
(He still looks on from land to land.)
Is it where German conscience woke,
When Luther's lips of thunder spoke?
Or where by Zürich's shore was heard
The calm Helvetian's earnest word?
Or where, beside the rushing Rhone,
Stern Calvin reared his unseen throne?
Or where from Sweden's snows came forth
The stainless hero of the North?

Or is there yet a closer band,
Our own, our native Fatherland,
Where Law and Freedom side by side
In Heaven's behalf have gladly vied?
Where prayer and praise for years have rung
In Shakspere's accents, Milton's tongue,
Blessing with cadence sweet and grave
The fireside nook, the ocean wave,
And o'er the broad Atlantic hurled,
Wakening to life another world?

No, Christian, no, not even here,
By Christmas hearth or churchyard dear;
Nor yet on distant shores brought nigh
By martyr's blood or prophet's cry;
Nor Western pontiff's lordly name,
Nor Eastern patriarch's hoary fame;
Nor e'en where shone sweet Bethlehem's star:
Thy Fatherland is wider far.

Thy native home is wheresoe'er
Christ's spirit breathes a holier air;
Where Christ-like faith is keen to seek
What truth or conscience freely speak;
Where Christ-like love delights to span
The rents that sever man from man;
Where round God's throne his just ones stand:
There, Christian, is thy Fatherland.

—*Dean Stanley.*

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE SPIRITUAL HARVEST.

II.

Next the two branches of the application of this principle. First, "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption." There are two kinds of life, one of the flesh, another of the spirit. Amid the animal and selfish desires of our natures there is a Voice which clearly speaks of Duty, Right, Perfection. This is the Spirit of Deity in

man : it is the life of God in the soul. This is the evidence of our divine parentage.

But there is a double temptation to live the other life instead of this. First, the desires of our animal nature are *keener* than those of our spiritual. The cry of Passion is louder than the calm voice of Duty. Next, the reward in the case of our sensitive nature is given *sooner*. It takes a less time to amass a fortune than to become heavenly-minded. It costs less to indulge an appetite than it does to gain the peace of lulled passion. And hence, when men feel that, for the spiritual blessing, the bread must be cast upon the waters, which shall not be found until after many days (scepticism whispers, "never"), it is quite intelligible why they choose the visible and palpable instead of the invisible advantage, and plan for an immediate harvest rather than a distant one.

The other life is that of the flesh. The "flesh" includes all the desires of our unrenewed nature, the harmless as well as sinful. Any labor, therefore, which is bounded by present well-being, is *sowing* to the flesh, whether it be the gratification of an immediate impulse or the long contrived plan, reaching forward over many years. Sowing to the flesh includes, therefore: 1. Those who live in open riot. He sows to the flesh who pampers its unruly appetites. Do not think that I speak contemptuously of our animal nature, as if it were not human and sacred. The lowest feelings of our nature become sublime by being made the instruments of our nobler emotions. Love, self-command, will elevate them all; and to ennoble and purify, not to crush them, is the long, slow work of Christian life. Christ, says Saint Paul, is the savior of the body. But if, instead of subduing these to the life of the spirit, a man gives to them the rein, and even the spur, the result is not difficult to foresee. There are men who do this. They "make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof." They whet the appetites by indulgence. They whip the jaded senses to their work. Whatever the constitutional bias may be,— anger, intemperance, epicurism, indolence, desire,— there are societies, conversations, scenes, which supply fuel for the flame, as well as opposite ones which cut off the nutriment. Now to indulge in these, knowing the result, is to foster the desire which brings forth the sin that ends in death. This is "sowing to the flesh."

If there be one to whom these words which I have used, veiled in the proprieties due to delicate reserve are not without meaning, from this sentence of God's word let him learn his doom. He is looking forward to a harvest wherein he may reap the fruit of his present anticipations. And he *shall* reap it. He shall have his indulgence. He shall enjoy his guilty rapture. He shall have his unhallowed triumph ; and the boon companions of his pleasures shall award him the meed of their applause. He has sown the seed ; and, in fair requital, he shall have his harvest. It is all fair. He shall enjoy. But tarry awhile : the law hath yet another hold upon him. This deep law of the whole universe goes further. He has sown to the flesh, and of the flesh he has reaped pleasure. He has sown to the flesh, and of the flesh he shall reap corruption. That is, in his case, the ruin of the soul. It is an awful thing to see a soul in ruins,— like a temple which once was fair and noble, but now lies overthrown, matted with ivy, weeds, and tangled briers, among which things noisome crawl and live. He shall reap the harvest of disappointment,— the harvest of bitter, useless remorse. The crime of sense is avenged by sense which wears by time. He shall have the worm that gnaws, and the fire that is not quenched. He shall reap the fruit of long-indulged desires, which have become tyrannous at last, and constitute him his own tormentor. His harvest is a soul in flames, and the tongue that no drop can cool ; passions that burn, and appetites that crave, when the power of enjoyment is gone. He has sowed to the flesh. "God is not mocked." The man reaps.

2. There is a less gross way of sowing to the flesh. There are men of sagacity and judgment in the affairs of this life, whose penetration is almost intuitive in all things where the step in question involves success or failure here. They are those who are called in the parable the children of this world, wise in their generation. They moralize and speculate about eternity, but do not plan for it. There is no seed sown for an invisible harvest. If they think they have sown for such a harvest, they might test themselves by the question, what they

would lose if there were to be no eternity. For the children of God, so far as earth is concerned, "If in this life only they have hope in Christ, then are they of all men most miserable." But *they*,— these sagacious, prudent men of this world,— they have their reward. What have they ventured, given up, sacrificed, which is all lost forever, if this world be all? What have they buried like seed in the ground, lost forever, if there be no eternity?

Now we do not say these men are absolutely wicked. We distinguish between their sowing to the flesh and the sowing of these profligates last spoken of. All we say is, there is "corruption" written on their harvest. It was for earth, and with earth it perishes. It may be the labor of the statesman, planning, like the Roman of old, the government and order of the kingdoms of the earth; or that of the astronomer, weighing suns, prescribing rules of return to comets, and dealing with things above earth in space, but unspiritual still; or that of the son of a humbler laboriousness, whose work is merely to provide for a family; or, lastly, the narrower range of the man of pleasure, whose chief care is where he shall spend the next season,— in what metropolis or which watering-place, or how best enjoy the next entertainment.

Objects more or less harmless all. But they end. The pyramid crumbles into dust at last. The mighty empire of the eternal city breaks into fragments which disappear. The sowers for earth *have* their harvest here: success in their schemes; quiet intellectual enjoyment; exemption from pain and loss; the fruits of worldly-wise sagacity. And that is all. "When the breath goes forth, they return to their dust, and all their thoughts perish." The grave is not to them the gate of paradise, but simply the impressive mockery which the hand of death writes upon that body for which they lived, and with which all is gone. They reap corruption, for all they have toiled for decays.

Ye that lead the life of respectable worldliness, let these considerations arrest your indifference to the gospel. You have sown for earth. Well, and then — what? Hear the gospel. A savior whose sacrifice is the world's life, whose death is the law of life, from whose resurrection streams a spirit which can change carnal into spiritual men,— whose whole existence, reflecting God, was the utterance of the divine truth and rule of heavenly life, the blessedness of giving,— to live so, and to believe so, is to sow to the spirit.

Lastly,— *sowing to the spirit.* "He that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap life everlasting."

What is meant by sowing to the spirit here is plain. "Let us not be weary in well-doing," says the apostle directly after; "for in due season we shall reap if we faint not." *Well-doing:* not faith, but works of goodness, were the sowing that he spoke of.

There is proclaimed here the rewardableness of works. So in many other passages: "Abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." "Laying up a good foundation for the time to come," was the reason alleged for charging rich men to be willing to give, and so all through. There is an irreversible principle. The amount of harvest is proportioned to the seed sown, exactly. There are degrees of glory. The man who gives out of his abundance has one blessing. She who gives the mite, all she had, even all her living, has another quite different. The rectitude of this principle, and what it is, will be plainer from the following considerations: —

1. The harvest is Life Eternal. But Eternal Life here does not simply mean a life that lasts forever. That is the destiny of the soul: all souls, bad as well as good. But the bad do not enter into this "Eternal Life." It is not simply the duration, but the quality of the life, which constitutes its character of eternal. A spirit may live forever, yet not enter into this. And a man may live but for five minutes the life of divine benevolence, or desire for perfectness. In those five minutes he has entered into the life which is eternal, never fluctuates, but is the same unalterably forever, in the Life of God. *This* is the reward.

2. The reward is not arbitrary, but natural. God's rewards and God's punishments are all natural. Distinguish between arbitrary and natural. Death is an arbitrary punishment for forgery: it might be changed for transportation. It is not naturally connected. It depends upon the will of the law-maker. But trembling nerves are the direct and the natural results of

intemperance. They are, in the order of nature, the results of wrong-doing. The man reaps *what* he has sown. Similarly in rewards. If God gave riches in return for humbleness, that would be an arbitrary connection. He did give such a reward to Solomon. But when he gives life eternal, meaning by life eternal, not duration of existence, but heavenly quality of existence, as explained already, it is all natural. The seed sown in the ground contains in itself the future harvest. The harvest is but the development of the germ of life in the seed. A holy act strengthens the inward holiness. It is a seed of life growing into more life. "Whatsoever a man soweth, *that* shall he reap." He that sows much, thereby becomes more conformed to God than he was before, in heart and spirit. That is his reward and harvest. And just as among the apostles there was one whose spirit, attuned to love, made him emphatically the disciple whom Jesus loved, so shall there be some who, by previous discipline of the Holy Ghost, shall have more of his mind, and understand more of his love, and drink deeper of his joy than others,— they that have sowed bountifully. Every act done in Christ receives its exact and appropriate reward. They that are meek shall inherit the earth. They that are pure shall see God. They that suffer shall reign with him. They that turn many to righteousness shall shine as the stars forever. They that receive a righteous man in the name of a righteous man — that is, because he is a righteous man — shall receive a righteous man's reward. Even the cup of cold water, given in the name of Christ, shall not lose its reward. It will be, therefore, seen at once reward is not the result of merit. It is, in the order of grace, the natural consequence of well-doing. It is life becoming more life. It is the soul developing itself. It is the holy spirit of God in man, making itself more felt, and mingling more and more with his soul,— felt more consciously, with an ever-increasing heaven. You reap what you sow,— not something else, but that. An act of love makes the soul more loving. A deed of humbleness deepens humbleness. The thing reaped is the very thing sown, multiplied a hundred-fold. You have sown a seed of life; you reap life. — *F. W. Robertson.*

THE STILL HOUR.

For myself alone I doubt;
All is well, I know, without;
I alone the beauty mar,
I alone the music jar.
Yet, with hands by evil stained,
And an ear by discord pained,
I am groping for the keys
Of the heavenly harmonies;
Still within my heart I bear
Love for all things good and fair.
Hands of want or souls in pain
Have not sought my door in vain;
I have kept my fealty good
To the human brotherhood;
Scarcely have I asked in prayer
That which others might not share.
I, who bear with secret shame
Praise that paineth more than blame,
Rich alone in favors lent,
Virtuous by accident,
Doubtful where I fain would rest,
Frailest where I seem the best,
Only strong for lack of test,—
What am I, that I should press
Special pleas of selfishness,
Coolly mounting into heaven
On my neighbor unforgiven?
Ne'er to me, howe'er disguised,
Comes a saint unrecognized;
Never fails my heart to greet
Noble deed with warmer beat;
Halt and maimed, I own not less
All the grace of holiness;
Nor, through shame or self-distrust,
Less I love the pure and just.
Lord, forgive these words of mine:
What have I that is not thine?
Whatsoe'er I fain would boast
Needs thy pitying pardon most.

—*Andrew Rykman's Prayer: Whittier.*

As we cannot prepare ourselves for the opportunities of each day by any amount of discipline or strength of determination, we have a right to believe that, by looking up and opening our soul to God, he will give us the power of meeting each opportunity aright.

Every noble act of devotion to truth, every pure life unstained with evil, every word of pity, every instance of forgiving goodness, helps us to a better faith in that divine and eternal goodness which has no variableness or shadow of turning.

See how everywhere the law of grace pours out its unceasing blessings within and around the law of works. God pays us our wages with strict accuracy every evening, but he gives us a thousand times as much as he pays us.

Though many are obliged to say, "No man cares for my soul," yet there is one who always cares for the souls of his children. God cares for souls evermore. All souls are his, and he will not let them go.

It is not true to say that man by nature is a child of sin. Man by nature is a child of God, and only by disease is a child of sin. Sin is abnormal. Goodness is man's proper and healthy condition.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

We have learned, therefore, that God is not to be feared. He never hates, never revenges, never threatens, never drives away, but infinitely protects, comforts, and welcomes. The only fear left to us is fear, not of him, but of ourselves,—fear, not that he will leave us, but that we, following our own ends, may lose him; for the supreme act of Fatherhood, of which we have to-day become conscious, is that God *leaves it to us*, gives us freedom, and then leaves it to us, loving us, trusting us, so far as to let us go, trusting that we shall return to him for the sake of his infinite love, and for that alone. He will never compel us. God leaves it to us. That is the supreme act of Fatherhood, of which, I say, we have become conscious. He honors us, treats us as having divine qualities, and then leaves it to us to follow them.—*Rev. F. B. Mott.*

It is a proud, a solemn, a sublime moment that sees the soul register its purpose and write it in imperishable letters, "This one thing I do, come weal, come woe, come ban of man or shock of time, come sorrow, distress, or loss, though I stand alone, here I stand, this I do"; and the life of slow earnest, arduous toil that follows partakes of the grandeur of the truth.

It is surprising how practical duty enriches the fancy and the heart, and deepens the affections. Indeed, no one can have a true idea of right until he does it, any genuine reverence for it till he has done it often and with cost, any peace ineffable in it till he does it always and with alacrity.—*J. Martineau.*

Prayer does not directly take away a trial or its pain, any more than a sense of duty directly takes away the danger of infection; but it preserves the strength of the whole spiritual fibre, so that the trial does not pass into temptation to sin.—*Stopford Brooke.*

O God, our Father, we thank thee for freedom, for the ever-enlarging thought and mind and life of man, for the increase of knowledge, for the onward march and triumph of truth, for noble toleration, for an abounding charity.

We thank thee that human love and kindness grow continually wider and deeper as the divine spirit of Jesus gets into the heart and life of man. Amen.

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

[*Send all matter for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.*]

OFFERS.

Will any mother who would like to have "Gentle Measures in Training the Young," by Jacob Abbott, or any one who would like "Black Beauty," address Miss Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.?

The following books are offered by the Cambridge Branch. Address Mrs. C. W. Kettell, 19 Brewster Street, Cambridge, Mass. Old correspondents will please address the members to whom they have formerly written. In order to receive books from the Cambridge Branch, it will be necessary henceforth to send a reference with the *first* request.

Fiction.

"Cleopatra," Ebers; "Danvers Jewels and Sir Charles Danvers"; "Lament of Dives"; "Lightly Lost"; "The Little Minister"; "John Halifax"; "Uncle Max," "Robert Ord's Atonement," "Our Bessie," "Not Like Other Girls," by Rosa N. Carey; "The Pioneers," "The Prairie," "The Deerslayer," by Cooper; "The Wreck of the Grosvenor"; "The House of the Wolf."

Miscellaneous.

"Sermons and Addresses," Jacob Manning; Fleetwood's "Life of Christ"; "The Old World in its New Face," H. W. Bellows; "Round about France"; "Flowers, Earth's Silent Voices"; "Lectures for Kindergartners," E. P. Peabody; "The Twentieth Century City," Josiah Strong; "Armenia and the Armenians"; "Hamlet."

Mrs. Susan A. Hudson, 73 West 131st Street, New York City, N.Y., offers "The Little Minister," by James M. Barrie.

Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass., offers current numbers of "The Harvard Graduates."

The *Farm Journal*, 1898, *New England Homestead*, 1897–98, and *Farm and Home*, 1897–98, are offered by Mrs. C. E. Jenks, 220 Clarendon Street, Boston, Mass.

REQUESTS.

[*Read directions at beginning of Book Club before writing.*]

Standing requests for libraries from: —

Mrs. O. A. Langston, Sidney, Comanche County, Texas;

Mrs. C. S. Stowell, Magnolia, Boulder County, Colorado;

Mr. Davis M'Carn, Anamosa, Iowa;

Mrs. D. Jayne, Jamestown, Chautauqua County, New York;

Mrs. Emma Miner, Lisbon, New Hampshire;

Stephen D. Rhoden, La Pine, Crenshaw County, Alabama;

Mrs. Isadore E. Rice, Oakland, Oregon.

Mrs. Margaret Ogilvie, "The Bonnie Briars," Grand Junction, Colorado. Mrs. Ogilvie is struggling to place in each school in her county, where the school committee will furnish a bookcase, a collection of good books. She has already supplied several schools, but there are three or four more in which she is particularly interested.

Those who send offers and requests for the Book Club will do us a kindness by noting the following suggestions: 1. Please write very clearly. 2. Do not use a pencil. 3. Do not use contractions, especially names of States (as Cal. and Col. for California, Colorado). 4. Write on one side only of the paper. 5. Do not forget to give your full address. (The State is now and then omitted.)

Mrs. Mildred Alley of Heareford, N.C., Stokes County, returns thanks to some friend in Dakota for several numbers of the *Favorite*, sent her just before Christmas. Would be glad of any other magazines or reading matter of any kind.

Mrs. Bettie Maske, Polkton, N.C., asks for Barnes's "Brief History of the United States," "History of England," and Worcester's Dictionary.

Current numbers of *Cosmopolitan* and a Dictionary are asked for by Mrs. Alice Bell, Linden, Oklahoma.

I am an invalid, and do not get out much. I would be very pleased to receive some magazines or books. We are not able to afford much reading, and would be much obliged if you would send me some. Mrs. Anna Manlove, Park Rapids, Hubbard County, Minnesota.

I am making an historical scrap-book; and anything about the army and navy will be acceptable, as I am interested in both. S. S. Bradford, Culpeper, Virginia.

Will you have reading matter, such as magazines, sent me? I am a poor girl, unable to supply myself with reading, and live such a lonely life. I live in an isolated old farm-house with an aged father, helpless from paralysis, and his second wife. All my brothers and sisters married and gone. So, you know, I will be grateful for anything to while the tedious hours away. (Miss) Mary A. Hutchinson, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

Miss Violet I. Cairns, Browning, Wisconsin, asks for current numbers of McClure's; also April, 1897, and October, 1898, of same.

I wish to thank the ladies of the Cheerful Letter Exchange for the reading matter they have so kindly sent me. Some of my friends who have never been interested in reading before read now, and enjoy it, too. I thank you all more than I can express. Wishing the *Cheerful Letter* much success, (Miss) Laura D. Lee, Lumberton, North Carolina.

I would be very glad of the following books, and will gladly send them to some

one else when I have finished with them: "Easy Latin Stories," "Latin Grammar," "First Lessons in Latin," Steele's "Elementary Chemistry," Longfellow's "Poems," "The Patience of Hope," "Devotional Hymns," *St. Nicholas*, or *Ladies' Home Journal*. (Miss) Lizzie Quisenberry, St. Just, Orange County, Virginia.

Mrs. David Knox, Escondido, San Diego County, California, will be pleased to receive any magazine containing housekeeping or fashion notes.

Through the *Cheerful Letter* we wish to return our sincere thanks to the party who sent us the *Saturday Evening Post*, also the *Ladies' Home Journal*. I should like to thank some one if they would send me the "Minister's Hand-book" or "Every-day Life and Every-day Morals." Mrs. A. A. Walker, McMinnville, Oregon.

I take this method of thanking all members of the Cheerful Letter Club for all reading matter they have sent me, especially Mary L. Clarke, whose address I misplaced. I have enjoyed the reading matter received, and have loaned to others, and know they have been enabled to pass away many lonely hours in reading same. Any reading I receive I will try to put to a good use. Mrs. Bettie E. Andrews, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina.

Mrs. A. B. Tuttle, Kenduskeag, Penobscot County, Maine, would like to have some magazine sent to her regularly.

Dear Cheerful Letter,—I would like to remind you again about sending reading to the invalid lady whose name I sent two or three years ago. I do not think she receives much now. Her address is Miss Julia Sinclair, Truro, Madison County, Iowa. As I wrote you before, she is an aged lady, living with an aunt, who is past eighty. They two live entirely alone, and would be glad of plenty of reading matter to help them pass away the time. They pass it on to others after they read it. Julia has a very active mind in a very frail body, and it is trying for her to sit and do nothing. She dearly loves piecing quilts and knitting, whenever she has anything to work with.

I do not care for any more floral papers. I have lost all my flowers, and do not care to read about them now. They will perhaps do some one else more good. My little boy would like some cancelled stamps. He is trying to make a collection. Mrs. W. C. Smith, Chase, Kansas, Box 156.

A little library has just been started in Farmington, San Juan County, New Mexico. We have money enough to pay running expenses, but have been able to purchase but forty books, and should be so glad to receive more. Miss Phœbe Hippenmeyer, Farmington, San Juan County, New Mexico.

Dear Cheerful Letter Friends,—I want to thank you all for being so kind in sending me reading to distribute among my mining neighbors, and I beg you will add to the kindness already shown by sending more. Custer, South Dakota, is a small mining town in the Black Hills; and, as mining is at a standstill here as well as other places, there are many idle men and boys. Money is an unknown article among us, and so all our pleasures we divide among our less fortunate neighbors. I observe they are quick to help us in our pain. As far as I can, I send out reading to these men and boys; and it keeps them at home, and away from the dreadful places that men can make. Anything and everything that is printed is very acceptable. What may seem the veriest trash is "just lovely" to some. The magazines, picture papers, and pretty cards I tie up and send to lonely ranches where there are women and children. From the back of a magazine sent me I found how the Ames Hill Club kept their members in reading. I have tried something of the same plan. Made a list, and each family can keep the book so long, they to pass it on. If they fail, I must have the excuse, and try to supply the family lacking. Something else. I ask for anything, especially paper-bound novels. One friend sends the *Century*, and another the *Register*. Address Mrs. H. J. Orr, Custer, South Dakota.

The address of Mrs. Evalee Meek is changed from Linwood, Indian Territory, to Davis, Indian Territory.

Some of the friends of Mrs. Mabel H. Taylor, New Kamilchie, Wash., would be glad to know whether any one has heard from her lately.

To Mrs. Alice Adkinson, Hutto, Texas. "Your letter might have been printed this month if it had been sent to the Book Club secretary. See directions."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

Contributions to this department may be sent to Mrs. J. S. Howe, Chestnut Street, Brookline, Mass.

SOME DAY.

Last night, my darling, as you slept,
I thought I heard you sigh,
And to your little crib I crept
And watched a space thereby;
And then I stooped and kissed your brow,
For, oh, I love you so!
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

Some time, when in a darkened place,
Where others come to weep,
Your eyes shall look upon a face
Calm in eternal sleep:
The voiceless lips, the wrinkled brow,
The patient smile, shall show,
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

Look backward, then, into the years
And see me here to-night,—
See, O my darling, how my tears
Are falling as I write—
And feel once more upon your brow
The kiss of long ago.
You are too young to know it now,
But some time you shall know.

—*Eugene Field.*

I have been much interested in the letter of "Sister Constance," with whom I heartily agree as to the responsibilities of parents, and the obligations laid upon them to guide and, in case of need, control their children; but I am tempted to write a few lines in regard to a subject that does not seem quite clear to her mind,—the great principle of making the child's punishment, wherever possible, illustrate the consequences of his wrong deed. For example, the child that strews his books or toys carelessly all about the house should be punished, not by being made to sit in a corner, but by being obliged to gather them all together again and put them in their proper place. The little girl who is disobedient and naughty when making a call with her mother, meddling with everything within her reach, and spoiling the pleasure of both her mother and the hostess, should be made to understand that, while she acts in such a way, she cannot be a welcome visitor, and should be punished by not being allowed to go again to make a call until she has learned to behave properly. In the same way the child that destroys his own or other people's property must be brought to recognize the fact that he is not as yet to be trusted with such possessions; and, in the case of injury of any kind inflicted on another, he must be obliged to make all the reparation, even at a sacrifice to himself, within his power. Another important instance is that of an untruthful child, whose mind ought, in accordance with the same principle, to be opened to the knowledge that, if he tells lies, he cannot be believed, and that his word will be considered unreliable on any subject until he shows that he can be depended upon. "Oh, you tell lies!" exclaimed an older child to a dear little boy who had indeed been caught in an untruth awhile before, but he answered earnestly: "No, I don't. I don't tell lies now that I *understand* about them." And his mother finds, to her joy, that he really takes extreme pains to be as accurate as possible in his statements.

This method of following wrong-doing, with its necessary consequences, is founded deep upon eternal realities, and ought to be not only efficacious as a means of punishment, but highly educative to the child in cultivating its perception of the great laws of cause and effect. Of course, it calls for intelligence and conscientious thought on the part of parent or teacher, and, of course, too, there must be cases where it cannot be employed; but, wherever the consequences of a wrong act are plain and simple in character, and easily made clear to the young mind, it seems to me that it is a great mistake not to avail ourselves of the help offered by this method, certainly the method of nature and of the wise Providence that rules over all our lives. E. S. B.

[The editor agrees with nearly the whole of the foregoing letter, and thanks the writer cordially for the help which such communications always give. On one or two points she differs slightly. In regard to truth-telling, it discourages a child very much to be told that his word *will* not be believed, and is likely to confirm the bad habit. Here, therefore, the method advocated seems to fail. She thinks, also, that the correspondent is scarcely just to "Sister Constance," who was speaking directly of

the gross exaggeration in "H. H.'s" statement. Most people would agree that it is a good plan to make the punishment, "*when possible, illustrate* the consequences of the fault"; but this is not the same thing as saying that under *no* circumstances should any punishment be inflicted other than allowing the child to suffer the natural result of his misdemeanor.]

Dear Friends of the Mothers' Corner,— I have for a long time read with deep interest the articles printed in this department. Now I should like to ask advice in regard to my own little girl. She has always had one peculiar trait of character. I hardly know what to call it. If any girl among her schoolmates is slighted or neglected by the rest of the girls, she always befriends her, no matter how poor or ragged she is. I have learned that she is herself snubbed and slighted for it; but that never deters her from doing it again and again, although I know she feels deeply the slights. She is a very sensitive, high-spirited child of twelve years of age. Has always shown this trait. I have asked her if it would not be pleasanter for her to go in her own set and let these other girls alone. But she says she "does not like the other girls when they can be so mean to a girl just because she is poor and ragged." She thinks they are horrid, and their friendship not worth much if it is founded on money alone. She says: "Mamma, I wouldn't look at a girl who was vulgar or acted indecent in any way; but these girls are nice girls, and well behaved. They are more refined than some of the other girls, only they don't belong to *their set.* If a girl comes in our room, no matter how she acts, if she is nicely dressed and brags enough, they take her right in their ring. If another girl comes who is poorly dressed and quiet, they turn up their hateful noses at her and make her unhappy. I am so sorry for these." I asked her if she enjoyed the society of these ragged ones as much as that of the girls of her own class. She says: "Yes, for this reason,— they are not so selfish or so deceitful. They may not be so pleasant to look at or to touch, but they have more *soul.*"

Now I would like to have some mothers, older and wiser than I am, advise me as to the best course to take with my girl. Will it be best to curb this tendency of hers or give it full sway? I told her once to be kind to the slighted ones, but not make intimates of them. She says: "It is *impossible* to do it. They follow me up, and the only way I could get rid of them would be to slight them." I myself can understand how they would cling to the only one who treated them kindly. Just now she is going with a girl who is in every way respectable, but whose intellect is not up to the average; and I am sure Edith does not enjoy her society half so much as that of some of the others. She only goes with her because the other girls treat her badly. I am afraid Edith will not be the happiest person in the world, she is so peculiar. Is this a benevolent nature, or is it a leaning toward trash? When she arrives at mature age, will she be so critical of her associates? Will she always be able to discriminate in the mean time? Advise me as to the best training needed. *Alice.*

[This seems to the editor a remarkable and very interesting case. Will not some of our readers give us their ideas on the subject? The unselfishness and unworldliness of "Edith" are traits that indicate an exceptionally fine character. Is there a want of practical wisdom? and can this be altered without hurting the child's higher nature?]

THE EDITOR'S CORNER.

LENT. II.

Sometimes the Editor wishes that she could write a personal letter to each member of the Cheerful Letter Exchange. But, as that is impossible, the next best thing is to write a letter here which any one may read who cares for it enough to take the trouble.

We each have our own way of keeping Lent, probably. Shall I tell you what I do? I read a sermon of Martineau's every day, from "Endeavors after the Christian Life." Besides this, I have the beautiful book "Leaflets for Lent," by W. P. Tilden. I wish that it might become so common that every one of us might have one. We did our best to share this treasure by printing, for two years, extracts from it in the *Cheerful Letter* at this season.

There is one thing that we all of us know, and yet we have now and then to stop and remind ourselves of it. It is that the comfort and happiness of our "still hours" ought to bear fruit in our lives. There is in one of Miss Yonge's books an interesting conversation where this idea is well expressed.

"But tell me," says the clergyman to the young girl, his sister-in-law, preparing for confirmation, "what do you understand by religion?"

"Oh, thinking—caring about holy things, stirring up one's spirit—feeling love to God —liking holy things," hesitated Emmeline, somewhat puzzled.

"There is the main-spring, but that is but half the matter. You had the beginning; but what came of it? How was it evidenced? You tried to feel. What did you try to do?"

"I was not well. I could not do much."

"But what did you try to do? Did you try to be more attentive to the home duties in which you had fallen short?"

"I did not think that was it."

"Did you try, when you were taken to London, to keep from following the foolish, undesirable ways of young people of your own age which you yourself thought wrong at first sight?"

"Do you mean the polka, Herbert?"

"Or did you, in the new scene, allow yourself to relax in the devotional exercises you had taken up? Don't answer me, but yourself."

Emmeline's duties may not be the same as ours, but the principle remains the same. And it has lately been pointed out, by a professor of psychology, that feeling, when it is not productive of action, is injurious and deteriorating to the character. Religious feeling is probably more so than other emotions. The enjoyment of our religious services, hymns and prayers, must therefore be the root to feed our daily life. A paper of very wide circulation, with articles in every issue calculated to feed the religious sentiment and excite devotional feeling, had, in one number, quotations from well-known passages of Scripture, dwelling among others on these words: "Let us present our bodies a living sacrifice," etc. Now, when these words were first used, they had a real meaning. They signified the willingness of the speaker to prove his loyalty to God and Christ by feeding lions and tigers with his own body. It would be interesting to know what they now mean to those who use them. On the next page of the paper was a fashion-plate, with illustrations of bonnets, most of them trimmed with bird-plumage. How many of the hundreds of thousands of readers of the paper, who had been thrilled by the beautiful language of the article, would be willing to sacrifice the feather out of the bonnet,—the emblem of cruelty and selfishness? Would it not be better to say outright what we mean to do, that is, "I will present my bonnet a sacrifice," and then *take out* the egret plume, than to say, "I present my body," and mean nothing by it at all?

We are not called upon to be thrown to lions in these days, but to give up the cup of coffee that makes us cross, the cigar that shatters the nervous system, the fur and feathers that are only ornaments to us, but mean death by torture to our dumb relations. How many of us will be willing, after our Lent services, to move along in a street-car or a church pew, to travel with a trunk that is not too heavy to lift, to fight more earnestly with our besetting sin, and expect to conquer, to bear our daily vexations and disappointments cheerfully, to join in a humble capacity that unpopular cause (whatever it is) in which we believe, but which we have neglected because it will deprive us of some worldly advantage or social success?

These are the things which strengthen the spiritual life.

DO DOGS REASON?

The following is given as a striking instance of the powers of reasoning which dogs are said to possess:—

A Newfoundland dog was sent across a stream to fetch the hats of his master and a friend, while they walked on some distance ahead. The animal, having reached the spot where the hats were, tried to swim the stream, holding both in his mouth at one time, and found that he could not. Their shapes prevented him. He paused, and seemed to be thinking out what was to be done, when he discovered that one hat was larger than the other. At once he put one inside the other, and carried them safely by the brim.

AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[*Please send all material for this department to Miss E. D. Chapman, 34 Buckingham Street, Cambridge, Mass.*]

Enigma.

What is it men and women all despise,
Yet one and all of them so highly prize?
Which never was for sale, yet any day
The poorest beggar can the best display;
Which kings possess not, yet full sure am I
For that great luxury they often sigh;
Which never bride did own, yet woe the day
When without one a bride should go away;
Which we can never buy, yet long to keep;
Which we sometimes taste, but never eat;
Which every man should have for growing corn;
Which the tired husbandman delights to own;
The very thing to take in a sick-room,
Though coming silent as spring's early bloom;
A little thing, oft wet with mother's tears;
A great, soft, yielding thing, which no one fears;
A thing so holy that we often wear
It carefully hidden from the world's rude stare.

Conundrums.

1. Why should free seats at church be abolished?
2. Do penmen ever do wrong?
3. Why is a field of grass like a knife-box?
4. Why is the sun malicious?

Charades.

1.

Hey, diddle, diddle,
The cat and the fiddle,
My *first* jumped over the moon;
And lost her skin,
My *second* so thin,
And my *whole* was a whip very soon.

2.

My *first* is a color, my *second* is rough,
My *whole* is a story we know well enough.

3.

At evening by my *whole* you'll think of days gone by, and never reckon
That by my *second* my *first* is made, and by my *first* my *second*.

Transpositions.

1. Transpose the letters in the word "*Misrepresentation*" and make four words which will recall a well-known scene in the New Testament.

2. Transpose the letters in "*Washington*," and make what the Audubon Society does not wish *ladies to wear*.

Answers to Puzzles in February Number.

Famous Men in Disguise.

1. Henry Ward Beecher.
2. P. T. Barnum.
3. Abraham Lincoln.
4. Samuel F. Smith.
5. Robert Burns.
6. William M. Thackeray.

Famous Women.

1. H. B. Stowe.
2. Grace Darling.
3. Mary A. Livermore.
4. Florence Nightingale.
5. Louisa M. Alcott.

Enigma.

Knitting needles.

Conundrums.

1. Because his gait (gate) is broken and his locks are few.
2. Because *we* cannot be wed without it.
3. They have ears, but cannot hear, and eyes, but cannot see.
4. Because the train always runs over sleepers.
5. Inn–attention.

Poetical Pi.

How happy is he born and taught,
That serveth not another's will,
Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his utmost skill.

Charade.

Atmosphere.

In a part of New South Wales the bees one year suffered much from drought, and they are reported to have made provision against it the next year by filling a large number of external cells with water.

When the first sanguine enterprises of conscience seem to fail (though fail they cannot, except to live as fast as our impatient fancies); when a cloud, like that which fell upon Christ's future, descends upon the prospects of the good; when the evils against which he has taken up his vow withstand the siege of his enthusiasm, and years ebb away, and strength departs, with no visible impression made, and friends become treacherous and foes alert, and God's good Providence seems tedious and cruel,— then weak spirits may succumb, able to keep faith alive no more; and even the man mighty of heart may find the controversy great, whether to go on and bear up against such sorrow of the soul. But, if he be wise, he clings more firmly to his fidelity, and thinks more truly of his mission, wherein he is appointed not to do much, but to do well. He, too, takes counsel of the prophets of old,—the sainted spirits of the good, who rebuke his impatience, and tell him that *they* followed each other at intervals of centuries, and, as they found, so after true service still left, the mighty work of good undone; that the fruits of heaven will not ripen in some sunny hour, but every noble mind must lend its transitory ray: and then, when the full year of Providence has gone its round, perchance the collective sunshine of humanity may have matured the produce of the tree of life. Such communion does, indeed, speak to him of his "decease which he must accomplish," asks him to join the glorious *succession* of the good, sends him with transfigured spirit back into the field of duty, gives him a sadder but more enduring wisdom, by which, with or without hope, in or out of peril, he lives and labors on, renouncing power and success, yet winning their divinest forms, and through self-crucifixion gifted with immortality.

Martineau, "Endeavors after the Christian Life."

Every one must know that his best life is his silent life; his truest growth, his silent growth. What I am, what is my life, myself, is inside; and inside is all the work done that fashions me. The soul is not made as the statue is, with click of hammer and chip of chisel from without; but the soul is made of its own ingrowth, as a peach is.—*J. F. W. Ware.*

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

There will be a meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange on Friday, April 7, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston.

All interested in this work are cordially invited to be present.

We remind all who send parcels or boxes with books, papers, etc., to correspondents or to libraries, that it is absolutely necessary to write at the same time to the receiver, enclosing the receipt which shows that the express or freight charges on the package have been paid. For want of this precaution, valuable packages have never been received. It is not probable that any of our *Cheerful Letter* friends send packages without prepaying them, but it is a common mistake of the express agents to charge the receiver for a prepaid package.

It is contrary to the rules of the Cheerful Letter Exchange to allow any one to make use of our paper by addressing letters, asking for money, clothing, or other articles, to those whose names are printed in the paper. This prohibition includes requests to borrow money and the offering of articles for sale. The name of any person who infringes this rule will be dropped from our list; and any one who receives a request of this description is desired by our Executive Committee to return no answer, but to enclose the letter at once to our secretary, Miss Langmaid.

DIRECTIONS.

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SECRETARY OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Bertha Langmaid, 2 Gordon Terrace, Brookline, Mass.

SECRETARY OF BOOK CLUB OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE,—Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 3 Webster Street, Allston, Mass.

TREASURER OF CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE, —Miss Louise Howe, 53 Linden Street, Brookline, Mass., or 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

Subscriptions and renewals should be sent to the treasurer, also all changes of address and requests for discontinuance. The subscription is fifty cents a year. If subscribers do not receive the paper regularly, they are requested to notify Miss Howe at once.

Those not able to subscribe for the paper, but desiring to receive it, may do so by writing to Miss Louise Howe, as above. Please give full name and address. Also send name of minister as reference. Some of our members take the paper in order to send it to those who are not able to subscribe for it.